

do not admit of an application to mental pain
tinder many of its
forms, especially when it proceeds from an accusing
conscience.

Certain mental affections—certain lusts and
passions, for instance
—lead to the most acute mental distress, naturally
and neces-

sarily ; and this distress may be held as indicative
of God's dis-

approval of these states. No man can assert, with
even the sem-

blance of plausibility, that the misery in such cases
is appointed

in order to prevent greater misery ; for the
phenomenon to be

explained is the existence of the misery, either
under its milder, or

under its more appalling forms. It is no explanation
of the minor

acute distress, which follows the first kindling of
evil affections,

to point to the fact that these evil affections, if
cherished, must

issue in greater distress. * The very proportioning
of the mental

pain to the degree of the sin, points the more
conclusively and

emphatically to the divinely-appointed connexion
between them.

The Divine indignation, against sin in its minor
forms rises and

swells as the sin increases, and manifests itself in
the infliction

of ever-deepening misery ; and the connexion
between the cause

and the consequence is indicated by the very
fact, that as the

one increases, so does the other—that as the rain
falls, HO do the

floods swell. It is not against the misery that God
is warning

us ; but it is against the sin, and by means of the
misery.

A
voice from heaven could scarcely declare more
clearly, and cer-

tainly could not announce so impressively, that
there are certain

mental affections which God would brand with
the stigma of

his severest reprobation.

Enough, at least, has been advanced to show
that this uni-

versal and divinely-inflicted suffering in body
and in mind

stands out as a grand mystery, worthy of an
attempt being

made to explain it: and that the common
explanations throw

just so much light upon its outskirts as to impress
us the more

with its vast magnitude and profundity, and with the desirable-ness of more light being let in to dispel the gloom.

SECT. II.—THE RESTRAINTS AND PENALTIES OF
DIVINE
PROVIDENCE.

It might be interesting to know what are the means which God employs in the government of those worlds in which there is no taint of evil. Can we be wrong in concluding that the